

RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

P.O. Box 3040 Langley, B.C. V3A 4R3



FRASER SOUTH

NEWSLETTER

WED. SEPTEMBER 16TH, 1992 AT 8.00 P.M.

MRS. ANNE SATHER AND DAUGHTER, OF WHITNEY GARDEN FAME (BRINNON, WASHINGTON) WILL PROVIDE OUR PROGRAM. MOST WILL KNOW THAT WHITNEY GARDENS PRODUCED A GREAT NUMBER OF OUR BETTER KNOWN RHODOS, SUCH AS VIRGINIA RICHARDS, BLUE PACIFIC, DOUBLE DATE, SUNNY DAY, TOP BANANA, ANNE'S DELIGHT AND MANY MANY MORE. SO COME ON NOW, THIS IS ONE THAT SHOULDN'T BE MISSED.

THE USUAL RAFFLE WILL TAKE PLACE, AND PLANT SALE TO FOLLOW MEETING. IN THIS RESPECT MEMBERS WHO HAVE ANYTHING FOR THE RAFFLE TABLE AND/OR KITCHEN GOODIES (AS WE HAVE NO VOLUNTEERS FOR OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING), PLEASE BRING ANYTHING ALONG, WHICH WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

SATURDAY, 19TH SEPT. A "HANDS-ON" PROPAGATION WORKSHOP TO TAKE PLACE AT CLAYS NURSERY, 3666 224TH STREET BETWEEN 1.00 AND 4.00 P.M. SUCCESSFUL PROPAGATORS SUCH AS HAROLD JOHNSON, DON MARTYN, DAVE CRABB, LES CLAY, WILL BE THERE TO EACH SHOW HOW THEY DO IT. ANY OTHER TOPICS WHICH YOU MAY WISH TO BRING UP, SUCH AS LEAF DISCOLOURATION, ETC. CAN BE DISCUSSED. BRING CUTTINGS.

SEPT. 25/27 - Still time to attend the Western Regional Conference at Newport, Oregon. Registration - \$30.00; Banquet - \$18.50. Particulars in your recent Journal, or if a Local Member you can get particulars from the Journal in the Library. Conference is at the Hotel Newport which is either on the Beach or pretty close to it.

SEPT. 17TH: Clint Smith is the speaker at the Vancouver Rhodo Society's meeting at Van Dusen Gardens.

PLEASE NOTE: As the Church requires the Hall on 21st OCTOBER, we have to change our October meeting to MONDAY, 19TH OCTOBER (this month only)

MONDAY OCT. 19th BILL STIPE who is the Manager of Meerkerk Gardens on Whidbey Island (which is the Seattle Chapter's Test Garden, and which we hope to visit 'ere long) will be with us to talk on the operation and upkeep of the Test Garden. The Spring Journal 1991 contains a detailed report on the ratings of many well known rhodos growing at Meerkerk. We also note that W.A. (Bill) Stipe was awarded the Bronze Medal by the Whidbey Island Chapter - see Journal 46/2/92, p.75.

MEETING: ST. ANDREWS ANGLICAN HALL, 20955 OLD YALE RD., LANGLEY

SUNDAY, OCT. 4TH: VANCOUVER SOCIETY'S FALL PLANT SALE AT CLAYS NURSERY FROM 1.00 P.M. TO 4.00 P.M.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE:

MEMBERSHIP: Chris Ballyn reports the following new members which we welcome:

Merilyn & Doug McBain, 2710 274A Street, Aldergrove, VOX 1A0
- 856-8744

Don Chapman, 19701 35A Avenue, Langley, V3A 7C6 - 534-5829

We have a correction from the June Newsletter - instead of Scott, Scott, it should have read Malcolm Scott and Danielle Scott. Our apologies to the Scotts!

TREASURER'S Report: Larry Chase reported that as a result of the recent Plant Sales close to \$3,000.00 was credited to our decreasing Bank Account. The following expenditures were approved at the Executive meeting:

\$100 - B.C. Council of Garden Clubs for their Scholarship Fund -
Contribution to Bronze Plaque for Fraser Garden at Ucluelet (see Bill Dale's Article attached).
Membership in the Species Foundation Garden, Federal Way.
Yearly contribution to District Fund to help defray District Directors' necessary travel expenses
Library contribution, and expenses with regard to Library Box and Water Wheel for PNE Display.

The Species Foundation, for those of us who haven't yet been there, is the main collector of species in the Western Region situated on land gifted by the Weyerhaeuser Corporation, and Harold Johnson, our exalted Program Manager and Tour Director, hopes to arrange a trip to Federal Way next year. Harold can also tell you the history of the Species Foundation.

PRESIDENTS' MEETING: Les and Chris Klapwijk attended the Presidents' Meeting last month and provided a Report containing their suggestions for cutting Journal costs. A timetable for the formation of further Chapters in B.C. was formed. It was at this meeting that the Fraser Plaque was discussed. A copy of the Report will be available at the Hostess Table at our Meeting.

CONGRATULATIONS and Best Wishes to the newly formed NANAIMO Chapter.

SECRETARY: Wendy Johannes has kindly undertaken to fill this post (Colleen Rodgers by this time will be in Williams Lake). Wendy will take on the duties until January - Volunteers please come forward - (Please READ the article on "Hints for new Members" - and

come on forward - for any of the areas.

LIBRARY: Pat Dahl will have backdated Journals available at the Library, and as usual is happy to order any reading materials on Rhodos, etc. you may wish to have. See catalogues at the Library.

P.N.E. DISPLAY: From all reports, and our personal views, the joint Display with the Lily Society looks great - To Del Knowlton and his group who set up the Pond and erected the water wheel, we think you did a great job, as well as Chris K. who helped with the cartage of plants as well as the schedule arrangements, and to Les and Harold for their participation, and to Sandy for his water wheel, we thank you.

DON MARTYN has been designated to prepare a questionnaire for all members in an effort to get our members' ideas, beefs, etc., and also to get more of you involved, so be prepared, and if you wish, contact Don with any ideas you may have please.

PICNIC: The weather held for our Picnic which we are sure was enjoyed by all who attended. John Crosby had an album of photos taken at the Garden Tours, which he probably will have at our meetings - doing a good job there John. Colleen and Brett Rodgers attended and were presented with "hardy" rhodos by Les along with our good wishes for their move to Williams Lake. They will still remain members - maybe even start a Club up there yet!

Lillian lost a pie knife at the Picnic and as it was of sentimental value, if anyone took it by mistake, would they please see Lillian. The Crabbs also ended up with a wooden handled serving fork which isn't theirs - so would the owner please step forward!!

XMAS: Now with the Picnic just over, we are already thinking of the next Party! - The Clays have kindly offered their home for our Xmas Social, and we have a video done by Dr. Mike Bale, which we may be able to show at the Social. (Although Mike seems to think the video needs some editing yet).

Next Executive Meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 22nd at 7.30 p.m. at the Clay residence.

1992 EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEES:

President: Les Clay (530-5188)
 Vice-President: Chris Klapwijk (888-0920)
 Treasurer: Larry Chase (576-9782)
 Secretary: (Interim) Wendy Johannes (856-3064)
 Directors: Harold Johnson (581-5253)
 Christopher Ballyn (857-0253)
 Don Martyn (823-4853)

Membership: Chris Ballyn
 Library: Pat Dahl (534-5200)
 Programs: E. Johnson & Les Clay
 Publicity: Diane Scott (533-4378)
 Hospitality: Mrs. Phil Anderson, Dorothy
 Griffin and Pat Glennie
 Bulletin: D. & E. Crabb (534-4884)

The following is a reprint from New York Chapter Newsletter Published in A.R.S. Bulletin July 1974, which we came across, and felt was worthy of reprinting!

Hints for New Members: How to Get Started!*

By Jane McKay, New York Chapter

I'm sure all of us have gone through the experience of "feeling left out". We've seen the officers and Board members (the chapter workers) bunched into tight little groups talking to each other at meetings. You get the feeling that you are not wanted, that "they" have a closed clique. Not so my friends. Take it from one who knows, I've been on both sides. For the first six or seven years of membership I attended plant sales, flower show, garden tours and an occasional meeting but I didn't belong. When volunteers were asked for I never raised my hand -- after all I didn't know anything, who would really want my help. When I attended meetings the workers all were bustling around or talking to one another, sure I got a smile and a hello but no one really took the time to talk to me. I felt unwelcome and unloved.

The turning point came when Betty Hager (who is always looking for a way to make new members feel at home) talked me into "volunteering for some small task. Suddenly I was involved in making our chapter endeavors successful. Now I knew the reason for those groups of chatting people -- the folks in those groups are discussing YOUR chapter's business. The reason you sometimes only get a smile and hello is because these people are busy planning activities, chapter programs, newsletters, educational sessions, study groups, etc., to keep you as happy and interested as often as possible. No one can keep everyone pleased all of the time but we try our best -- a lot of time and effort goes into keeping your chapter running smoothly. So come on and get into the swing of chapter activities -- the more volunteers to help with the work the more time we will have to talk to one another.

Can you help to fill vases at flower shows, help to make sure all members have name tags at meetings, bake a cake? These are just a few ways to get started, there are many others. Let us know what you can help with.

I'm one chapter member who is extremely pleased at an opportunity to work for the benefit of us all. I have a great feeling of accomplishment and a strong feeling of gratification because I'm doing something worth while not because I have to but because I want to.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE READ THE ABOVE, WE LOOK FORWARD TO VOLUNTEERS
FOR SECRETARY, RAFFLE, SOMEONE TO RELIEVE PAT AT THE LIBRARY
DURING THE MEETINGS, PLANT SALE, HOSTESS TABLE, ETC. ETC.

Bill Dale of Victoria has written many articles on the life of George Fraser, and has kindly let us have a copy of his most recent one which follows:

George Fraser Honoured In SCOTLAND.

George Fraser, Scottish born and trained horticulturist, who emigrated to Canada in 1883, and gained world-wide recognition as a rhododendron hybridizer and grower, was finally honoured in his native land on May 23 of this year. In 1889, Fraser was the foreman on the building of Beacon Hill Park, Victoria,

working under John Blair, another Scot, who had won the competition for the design of the new park.

In 1894, Fraser moved to Ucluelet, B.C. where he built a nursery out of the rugged west coast bush and lived there until his death in 1944 in his ninetieth year. Fraser was interested in crossing the local wild fruit and shrubs with domestic varieties in an effort to produce new strains which would combine the better qualities of both parents. His best known hybrid was a cross between *Rhododendron canadense* and *R. japonicum*. When the resulting hybrid bloomed in 1919, he sent a budded plant to the Arnold Arboretum in Boston MA., and to Kew Gardens. In 1920, when those two plants bloomed, both Kew and Arnold Arboretum, quite independently named it *Fraseri*.

In an article in the Vancouver Province in 1936, Fraser was described as "Canada's Luther Burbank". Even so, he was little known in Canada. When he died in 1944, he was buried in an unmarked grave in Ucluelet.

In 1990, the Army, Navy and Airforce Veterans, the Lions Club and the Ucluelet area Historical Society placed a granite stone on Fraser's Grave. In 1991, the Ucluelet citizens began building a George Fraser Memorial Garden in that village on land that he had donated to the school board, on which the two Ucluelet schools are now located.

In 1990, the American Rhododendron Society posthumously awarded George Fraser their Pioneer Achievement Award, only the fourth time that this award has been given. Fraser has remained relatively unknown in his native Scotland. This has now been corrected thanks to the efforts of Mr. Peter Bennett of Victoria and the Canadian Scottish Heritage Foundation, which Mr. Bennett is a director.

Peter and his wife Jean travelled to Scotland where Peter had the honour of unveiling a bronze plaque in honour of George Fraser.

On May 23, 1992, approximately 75 people gathered at Christies Nursery, Fochabers, where to the skirl of kilted pipers, Fraser was finally recognized for the honour which he had brought to his native land.

It is most fitting that the plaque should be placed there, as records show that in 1871, George Fraser was a servant in the household of the Christie family. Later that year he started his apprenticeship in gardening at nearby Gordon Castle. Among the honoured guests present were Peter and Jean Bennett, Lady Gordon-Lennox of Gordon Castle, Mr. Lester Borley, director of the Scottish National Trust, and Mabel and George Christie.

I had planned to send a plant of *R. Fraseri* from my garden in Sidney to Scotland to be placed near the plaque but could get a permit to do so because Agriculture Canada could not certify that the plant would be free of powdery mildew ! Fortunately, Kenneth Cox of Glendoick, Scotland, grows *R. Fraseri* and will give a plant free of charge, to fulfil the original intention.

It was a long time coming, 121 years, but the one-time servant finally received his well deserved recognition at the nursery where he started his gardening career as a young 17 year old.

WATER — WATER!

By George Clarke, Portland, Oregon

Here in the Pacific Northwest we tend to believe that in September we should bid summer adieu and prepare to welcome fall and winter. More often than not the very long dry spell persists into fall, and the first rains are often insufficient to permeate the soil deeply.

This condition creates a dilemma that confronts most of us. It is whether or not to continue to irrigate our rhododendrons. There are two opposing viewpoints on the subject. One of our well-known authorities has advocated the withholding of water after August 1st in order to stop any further growth and allow the plants to harden-off for winter.

I disagree with this view point, feeling that while this may be prudent action in certain localities it does not apply here. During our prolonged period of rainless days, which some years runs well into October, I urge that adequate watering be continued to provide for our plants a condition as nearly as possible like that found in their native rain-forest habitat. Those huge spring blossoms are formed in late summer, so give the plant all the raw material needed to do its job.

We should consider the individual plant and its growing environment. If planted in a water-retentive organic soil mix a rhododendron will need less water than if planted in a sharp drainage mix. One that is located in shade will lose less water than one in full sun. A well established plant will have a greater root system and get by with less irrigation. It is important to remember that a newly planted specimen must re-establish the capillary action between its root ball and the surrounding soil. One or even two years are required to create this relationship. During this period special attention should be paid to watering.

Another reason for ample fall watering is the advisability of taking your plants into freezing weather in as moist condition as possible. I have never forgotten the sight, years ago, of Mr. Lambert of Lambert Gardens out watering his plants like mad at the first indication of freezing weather. We have rarely lost any plants during periods of low temperatures and in large part I believe that this is due to following his example.

I think we all agree that we should withhold fertilizer after mid-June in order to avoid the stimulation of late growth, but withhold Water, NEVER!

The above Article is a reprint from A.R.S. Quarterly Bulletin, Vol.28 #3 July 1974